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OAKENGATES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

INTERIM REPORT

ON THE

HEALTH & SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

OF THE

OAKENGATES URBAN DISTRICT

FOR THE

YEAR 1943.

Once again the Ministry of Health has required that the Report on the Health of the District shall be presented in an abbreviated interim form.

Following the almost complete absence of the two common infective conditions - Measles and Whooping Cough - in 1942, there was a return to the District, 59 and 29 cases respectively being notified. Compared with neighbouring Authorities, these numbers were small, and did not represent epidemic conditions.

There was again a complete absence from Diphtheria, while Scarlet Fever and Pneumonia showed some increase - 8 and 15 cases respectively.

Vital Statistics show that the Birth Rate is higher than that for the Country generally, while the death rate is only slightly in excess.

It is satisfactory to note that deaths arising from maternal conditions showed a complete absence during the year.

The sanitary circumstances of the Area are dealt with under the relevant sections of the Report. Attention has been drawn to the long waiting list of applicants for houses, and the magnitude of the problem which faces the Council.

At the end of September, your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Bennett relinquished his post, and his place was taken by Mr. Tong.

The Medical Officer of Health takes this opportunity of thanking the Sanitary Inspector, and other members of the Staff for their close co-operation during the year, and in the compilation of this Report.

Statistics and Social Conditions.

Area (in acres)	2,329.
Estimated Population.	10,770
Number of inhabited houses at 31st.Dec.1943 (according to Rate Book)	3,050
Rateable Value	£35,761.
Sum represented by 1d. Rate	£131.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

Live Births.

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	94	107	201
Illegitimate	8	2	10
Totals	102	109	211

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population 19.6

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population - England and Wales 16.5

Still Births.

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	2	9	11
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Totals	2	9	11

Rate per 1,000 total (Live and Still) Births 49

Deaths.

	Males	Females	Total
Total number of deaths	89	57	146

Death rate per 1,000 of population 13.5

Death rate per 1,000 of population - England and Wales 12.1

Infantile Mortality.

All infants per 1,000 live births 37.8

All infants per 1,000 live births - England and Wales 49

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 live Legitimate births 39

Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 live Illegitimate births Nil

Total number of Infant deaths Legitimate 8
Illegitimate Nil

Deaths from:-

Cancer (all ages)	25.
Measles (all ages)	-
Whooping Cough (all ages)	1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	-

Maternal Mortality.

Under this heading, there were no deaths .

Chief causes of death.

Tuberculosis (all forms)	8
Syphilis	3
Influenza	4
Cancer	as above.
Intra-cranial Haemorrhage	17
Heart Disease and circulatiry disturbances	38
Bronchitis	9
Pneumonia	7
Digestive Disturbances	7
Nephritis	6

Ambulance.

During the year, the Ambulance service continued under the control of the Local Authority, and the difficulty previously encountered in retaining part-time attendants was overcome by appointing a full-time officer.

The Ambulance services of this Area, by arrangement, continued to be used on an ever increasing scale by adjoining Authorities.

Scavenging.

Difficulty continued to be experienced during the year in maintaining an efficient scavenging service, and the conditions were aggravated by young men being called to H.M. Forces and their places being taken by men considerably over military age.

At the close of the year, some improvement was apparent, and it is beleived that this improvement can be maintained.

The presence off 390 privies and 330 pail-closets in the Area is to be deprecated, and from a hygienic, and from an economic point of view, this type of sanitary convenience should be eradicated at the first available opportunity.

Vermin infestation.

During the year, in accordance with the provisions of the Rat and Mouse Destruction Infestation Order 1943, a survey of the District was made to discover the extent of serious rat infestation. The result of this survey was that 4 properties were found to have 'major infestations', and 5 had 'minor infestations'.

The powers under the Rats and Mice (Destruction Act are vested in the County Council, and any complaints now arising are tabulated and sent to the County Council for appropriate action.

A number of houses have been treated during the year for the eradication of bed bugs.

Water Supplies.

During the year, the supply was constant, and a good pressure was maintained in all parts of the District with the exception of Ketley Bank, which is supplied by the Borough of Wenlock from the Harrington Wells.

The Mutual Aid Scheme with the Wellington R.D.C. to supply temporary needs in the Trench area has continued in operation, and assistance has been given to adjoining districts.

The Chlorinating Plant installed at the request of the Ministry of Health to guard against the risk of pollution which is greatly increased under war conditions, has been in operation throughout the year.

Quarterly samples subjected to Chemical and Bacteriological examination show that the quality of the water is satisfactory.

The leakage in the service reservoir at Redhill has caused great concern. A contract has been placed for the erection of a Steel tank to permit of the maintenance of a continuous supply pending the emptying and repairs, or construction of a new reservoir.

The supply to Ketley Bank has several times been unsatisfactory during the year. A contract has been placed for a new pumping plant and elevated tank to be constructed in that Area, which will afford a continuous supply of water at a good pressure from the Council's own source.

Practically the whole of the population are supplied with water from the Council's mains either by taps in their houses, or by stand-pipes.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

There have been no extensions to the sewerage system during the year.

The service has been maintained and is working efficiently. New drainage from five properties has been connected to the sewer.

The disposal of sewage has been maintained, and efforts made, by means of regular analyses to obtain a satisfactory effluent.

Housing.

The housing shortage continued to increase during the year, and now presents a problem of some magnitude. At least 350 houses already included in the Council's pre-war demolition scheme have been classified, and this number can be increased considerably on survey. Over 340 persons have made application for homes in the District, and are at present included in a waiting list. In addition, demobilisation should bring it's complement- a complement which it is anticipated will be substantial - of people, perhaps married during hostilities, or who for some other reason have had no chance of starting a home, but are now desirous of doing so. There will also be the question of provision having to be made to eradicate overcrowding.

During the year, effort was made again to obtain permission to continue the construction of the housing scheme at present partially completed. No advance was made.

The total number of Council houses is 425, and the total capital expenditure to date is £287,315 - 17 - 2d.

British Restaurant.

This centre at Holyhead Road continues to give satisfactory service, and is financially sound. The average number of mid-day meals served is 220, and it is reported that each meal has a calorific value of between 850 and 900 calories .

To bring this convenience to the more distant parts of the District, it is proposed to open branches at St. Georges, and at Trench, the meals beinb cooked and transported to the above two Districts from the main depot in Holyhead Road.

Milk and Dairies

The major portion of milk supplied in the Area comes from Crudgington Creamery. Although the quality is good, certain difficulties from souring have been experienced, particularly in the summer months. This may be attributed to the delay between delivery to the retailer, and the subsequent distribution to the consumers, coupled with the not infrequent inadequate storage facilities of the middle man.

Meat and Other Foods.

The meat supplies for the District continue to be served from the central abbatoir at Shrewsbury, and are subjectto local examination in the District.

During the year, the following articles of food were condemned:

Bacon	50 lbs.
Beef	16 lbs.
Liver	13 lbs.
Cheese	46 lbs.
Tins of meat. products	27
Tins of fish products	17
Jars of jam	5
Tins of milk	8
Tins of fruit	25
Tins of vegetables	38

Infectious Diseases,

Prevalence of, and control over infectious and allied diseases.

The following table gives the number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of deaths:-

Disease.	Cases Notified 1943	1942	Deaths
Measles	59	-	-
Whooping Cough.	29	1	1
Scarlet Fever.	8	1	-
Pneumonia	15	4	-
Erysipelas	2	3	-
Puerperal Pyrexia.	3	4	-

Incidence of disease in the various age groups.

Years.	Measles. Male	Measles. Female	Whooping Cough Male	Whooping Cough Female	Scarlet Fever Male	Scarlet Fever Female.
0-	2	2	2	1	-	-
1-	6	7	3	6	-	-
3-	5	4	4	3	1	1
5-	17	9	4	6	2	2
10-	2	1	-	-	-	1
15-	-	3	-	-	-	-
25-	-	1	-	-	-	1

Pneumonia.

Years.	Male	Female
0-	1	1
5-	2	2
15-	2	2
45-	2	3
65-	-	-

Scabies.

94 cases were treated at the Newport Centre, and 67 at Donnington. Of these 161 individual cases, in certain instances repeatment of treatment was found necessary.

The facilities provided were found to be of great service, and although circumstances arose which limited the use of the Auxiliary Centre at Donnington, the Newport Centre was able to cope with all demands made on it. Whilst the disease was prominent in the spring and summer months, the close of the year showed a diminution.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The bi-annual return submitted to the Ministry of Health for the period ending December 31st. 1943 was as follows:-

	Age under 5 years.	5 years and over but under 15 years.	Total
Number of children (including temporary residents) who completed the full course of immunisation between 1st. July & 31st Dec. 1943	81	43	124
Approximate estimated number of children in the Authority's Area at 31st. December 1943	598	1361	1959
Percentage of child population considered to be immunised at 31st. December 1943	46%	80.87%	70 .1%

Diphtheria Immunisation (Contd)

The clinical side of the scheme for Diphtheria prophylaxis continued to be administered by the County Health Department. With a view to increasing the efficiency of the scheme, and of the data available, an additional temporary clerk was appointed during the year to compile registers of all the children in the Area under 16 years of age. In this register was incorporated all the available information, and a circular letter was sent to every family where the children appeared not to have received treatment. It was then possible to get a reasonably true picture of the position, and moreover the Authority were able to supply the County Authority with individual details of children who had not yet been immunised. By an arrangement with the local office of the Ministry of Food, the information in the registers is brought up to date at regular intervals.

Tuberculosis.

The number of notified cases on the register at December 31st. 1943, and the comparative number for 1941 and 1942 are as follows:-

	Males.		Females		Total
	Pulmonary	Non Pulm	Pulm.	Non Pulm.	
1943.	37	36	23	44	140
1942	36	38	25	43	142
1941	33	34	22	43	132

New Cases.

Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary	Total
8	3	11

Death rates.

	Oakengates.	England & Wales.
Death rate from Pulmonary T.B. per 1,000 population.	.65	.50 x
Death rate - Non pulmonary T.B. per 1,000 population.	.09	.11 x
Total death rate (all forms)	.74	.61 x

(N.B. x indicates provisional figures.)

Tuberculosis Contd.

New Cases and Mortality 1943.

Age Group	New Cases.				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non Respiratory		Respiratory		Non. Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	1	3	1	1	1	1	-	-
25 - 35	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
35 - 45	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
55 - 65	2	-	-	-	2	1	-	-
Totals	5	3	2	1	4	3	-	1

Cancer.

The number of deaths from Cancer in 1943 was 25 (14 males and 11 females.)

	Oakengates	England & Wales.
Death rate per 1,000,000 living.	2321	1723

20th.
June
1944.

W. A. M. Stewart.

Medical Officer Of Health.